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FOR STATE ISN/CTR, PM/ISO/PMAT (24/7), DS/IP/EUR

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TAGS: [ASEC](#) [KCRM](#) [KNNP](#) [MNUC](#) [PARM](#) [PO](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#)  
SUBJECT: FOLLOW-UP REPORTING REGARDING ALLEGATION OF  
NUCLEAR MATERIAL SMUGGLING - PORTUGAL

REF: A. 07 STATE 162091  
[1](#)B. HAYCRAFT/PMAT E-MAIL DATED 7/24/08  
[1](#)C. LISBON 001808  
[1](#)D. NAP ASSESSMENT DATED 7/25/08

Classified By: Ambassador Thomas Stephenson, Reason 1.4 (c)(d)(f)

[1](#)1. (S/NF) Synopsis: On July 24, a walk-in approached Embassy Lisbon and reported that he knew of 5 to 6 plates of Uranium that are for sale in Portugal. The plates are allegedly in the possession of an ex-Russian General living in Portugal who was using a Portuguese Judge to broker sales. Allegedly, the plates were stolen from Chernobyl. A color photocopy of a photo of the plate was provided. Referenced NAP assessment cast doubt on the provenance of the alleged Uranium and conjectured the Uranium brick was similar to African Uranium scams first noted in the 1980s. The walk-in was interviewed again on July 30 by GRPO chief and RSO. Additionally, following lead provided in the interview, the RSO learned through police sources associated with a counterfeit case in Coimbra, that the walk-in is well known and is nicknamed the "Giraffe" and is involved in many scams. End Synopsis.

[1](#)2. (S) Based on the analysis and other guidance, the walk-in referenced in ref c returned to the Embassy on July 30, at 1040 hours. The purpose of the interview was to elicit additional information regarding "Orlando", the Judge, the ex-Russian General, the location of the alleged plates, and get a copy of the promised "analysis" of the plates.

[1](#)3. (S) The walk-in arrived on foot at approximately 1040 hours. In his possession were keys to an Audi, Portuguese identity card, photocopy of "analysis" of the Uranium, and ten cents. He had no wallet, cell phone, or miscellaneous papers in his pockets.

[1](#)4. (S) The walk-in stated he is unable to provide additional information regarding the Judge or the ex-Russian General. However, he described Orlando as married, with children, who works as a truck driver for a company named Largo. He promised to provide the full name of Orlando later today (On July 28, the walk-in provided Orlando's cell phone number 916521158. A Vodafone reverse directory listed the number as being registered to Orlando Jose Fernandes). Regarding the location of the plates, the walk-in claimed that one of the Uranium plates is located in the Judge's house and that the remaining plates are located in northern Portugal just south of the Spanish border. He did not provide more specific information.

[1](#)5. (S) Of note, the walk-in claimed that Orlando advised him not to approach the American or Israeli embassies, but suggested that the Iranian or Libyan embassies would be better options. He further attested that he has not approached anyone or any other government or entity with information regarding the plates. The walk-in stated he did

not want to sell the plates to bad guys because they are dangerous -- he would rather make less money than sell the plates to the bad guys. Regarding the analysis, the walk-in stated that the analysis was done at Orlando's residence in Peniche. He claimed no knowledge of what the analysis meant.

The "analysis" appears to be a "spectral analysis" of the plate compared with a known sample of some material (unknown word). Magically they match. The next step was subtracting various figures and densities and eventually arriving at 5.84 kg of Uranium (The reporting officer says he received a D minus in college Chemistry, but nevertheless recognized the dubious quality of the "analysis"). A scanned copy of the analysis will be forwarded to appropriate offices.

¶6. (S) Overall, the interview, which lasted well over an hour, focused on the alleged sale of Uranium plates, but also covered a wide array of illicit money-making opportunities that the walk-in has been involved in within the past two years -- alcohol sales, counterfeiting, small-time deals. The walk-in, in a self-analysis, described himself as a perpetual failure and poor decision maker, in search of "El Dorado". For instance, he claimed to have provided information in a US dollar counterfeit case within the past two years. The walk-in claimed over 10 million counterfeit US dollars were seized and that the USG was involved in the case. It should be noted, that there was a large counterfeit case in northern Portugal within the past year and a half. The amount seized was approximately the amount mentioned by the walk-in. The USSS did participate in the case and follow-up cases. This counterfeit case was broadly publicized in the Portuguese press, however, the involvement of the USSS was not well publicized. This claim sparked the RSO's interest since RSO was involved in coordinating the

case with the USSS. A subsequent phone call to a Judicial Police (PJ) source in Coimbra determined that the walk-in is well known to them and is nicknamed the "brother-in-law" and the "Giraffe." Additionally, the walk-in is currently a person of interest ("arguido" in Portuguese) in the aforementioned counterfeit case and is a suspect in another case, according to the PJ source. The walk-in may also be involved in selling stolen cars.

¶7. (S) Assessment: The walk-in is a small-time hustler and criminal. Furthermore, the new information provided by the PJ places in question his bona fides. At the least, RSO believes the walk-in is a witting participant in this uranium scheme. The old Judge and ex-Russian General more than likely do not exist and were created in order to embellish the scam and add sex appeal. Whether Orlando is a co-conspirator, unwitting pawn, or also an invented personality remains unknown.

¶8. (S/NF) Next Steps: Pending the final analysis by Washington, RSO and GRPO will present this case to the Judicial Police (PJ) and request that they investigate and determine whether these plates in fact exist, and if so, to seize them. At this point there seems to be no nexus to terrorism or other nuclear material smuggling in Portugal.

¶9. (S/NF) GRPO is sending in via their channels a report regarding yesterday's development.

Stephenson